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THE HOSTING AGAINST THE NORTHERN IRISH IN 1566,

THE following Despatch addressed, by the Government of Ireland to Queen Elizabeth, presents a vivid picture of a great "Hosting," or "Rising-Out"—which the "Englishry" of the Pale at that time almost annually performed, as an expedition or campaign against one or other insurgent chieftain of the unsubjugated "Irishry.."

Shane or John O'Neill, the formidable enemy against whom this martial demonstration of the year 1566 was directed, was the famous Shane-Dymas, or John "the Proud," chief of the Cinel-Eoghan, or Clan O'Neill, Lord of Tir-Eoghan (Tyrone), or "the country of Eoghan's race," and principal Chieftain of Ulster. He was the legitimate son of the first Earl of Tyrone; but, an illegitimate brother having been preferred by his father to be appointed as successor apparent to the earldom, he slew the rival claimant; and on the death of his father, was elected to be chief of his powerful clan. His right, however, was disputed by his successor, Turlough Luinnach, and by the celebrated Hugh O'Neill, Baron of Dungannon, the son of the slain bastard, and afterwards Earl of Tyrone. Nor was it acknowledged by the State. The "loose men" of his country, together with those of the bordering regions, were in the habit of plundering the inhabitants of the Pale. Their chiefs were unable to check these depredations—even had they been inclined to do so. The Englishry were thus continually subject to raids and ravages, which kept burning a constant hostile feeling towards the bordering Irishry; and this disposition soon lighted up into fierce warfare whenever the State called on the colonists to repel or revenge aggressions. All the nobility and other feudal tenants of the Crown were bound by their tenure to perform military service for a certain number of days in each year. It would seem that they responded, in the year under our notice, to the summons for an expedition—which appears to have been especially intended to punish a predatory band led by three brothers of the O'Reilly sept—with such alacrity, as to have equipped a force double that which they were obliged to supply. Considerable stress is laid on the circumstance of the Earl of Desmond having joined the Hosting. The loyalty of that potent nobleman, who was afterwards the *ingens rebellibus exemplar* of Irish history, was questionable:—and therefore it was of no mean importance that he showed such readiness to serve the Queen. The obnoxious O'Reillys were brothers of the O'Reilly, (Hugh) chieftain of Breifny, (now the county of Cavan,) who, together with his brother Edmond, Tanist or successor-elect to the chieftainry, agreed with Lord Deputy Sir Henry Sidney, by indenture dated 1567, to prosecute these three insurgent leaders with fire and sword. [*Note to Annals IV. Masters, anno 1583.*]

The force, marched into Ulster, consisted of 8,000 men of the Pale, and of 500 stout Galloglasses, dashing horse, and good marksmen under Desmond:—these, however, were *amateurs* in comparison with “the garrisons,” or Queen’s soldiers, who joined them, and whose numbers are not mentioned. The exploits of this not inconsiderable force appear somewhat incommensurate with its magnitude. But, while commenting on the insignificance of its performance, we must recollect that the redoubted and dreaded O’Neill hovered over this little army with a “host” to which it was, doubtless, numerically inferior. The force following O’Neill’s own banner is, in the succeeding year, described as amounting to 200 harquebusiers, 400 horse, 1,500 galloglasses, 800 red-shank Scottish island-auxiliaries under MacLean, and 2,000 kerne, or foot-soldiers, besides many loose irregular followers. With the accustomed policy of Celtic strategy, Shane O’Neill always declined to come to action unless his position gave him an advantage; and, like an able general, made sure of a retreat into the fastnesses of his country, the islands in Lough Neagh, and the forest of Glenconcan.

HERBERT F. HORE.

*Pole-Hore, Weaford,
2d May, 1853.*

DESPATCH FROM THE LORD DEPUTY AND COUNCIL OF IRELAND TO QUEEN ELIZABETH.

[*From the Original in H. M. State-Paper Office, London.*]

It may please your most excellent Majesty to be advertized that, for the defence of your Highness’ English Pale against the rebelles of the Northe, while I, your Majesty’s Deputy, with the force of your Majesty’s army, addressed our repair into Ulster, a general Hosting of the ordinary force or rising out of your Majesty’s English pale was proclaimed for six weeks, and besyds that, an extraordinary holding or entertaynment by them granted in supple and augmenting of the same hosting untill our retorne, for 200 horsemen and 1,200 archers and gonners of the same English pale hiered and waged of their benevolent and generall contribution. And also by a further benevolence and contribution of the gentlemen of the same your Majesty’s English pale in easement and dischargde of the rest of your Majesty’s subjects of the same, a lyke extraordinary cesse borne to the fyndying of horsemeat and man’s meat, during the same space, to the Earl of Desmound and his trayne, who frankly and honorably of his owne offer, to declare his dewtyfulness unto your Majesty, and his faithfulness and loyaltie to the defence of your Majesty’s good subjects of this your Highness’ realme, his natyf country, did accordingly repayr from his contree unto these borderers, (assisted with Sir Warham Seint Leger and Captain Heron,) to joigne with other, the lords, gentlemen, and forces left for the defence of the same,—bringing with him in his company his brethren John of Desmound, and Thomas, the Lord Fitz-Moryce of Kyrye,* the Barons of Dunboyne and Coraghmore, and others of the best gen-

* Paternal ancestor of the Marquis of Lansdowne.

tllemen of his country, as William Burke,^b William O'Mulryan,^c the White Knight, and many other lyke gentlemen, with an hondreth horsemen, 300 galloglasses, and four score and twelve gonners.

The Lord Chancellor, the Bishop of Meath, Justice Plunkett, the Master of the Rolls, Justice Dillon, Sir Thomas Cusack, and others, were left commisioners for the raysing and commanding of those and the rest of the forces of your Majesty's English Pale and other your good subjects of this realme, to the said defence, and all other ways as occasion should require.

The Barons of Delvyn, Trymlettstown, Howth, and Lowth, were assigned to the leading of such of those horsemen and fotemen as, being severally distributed under their chardges, were placed sundry where on those borders for the defence of the same. And the Earl of Desmond, assisted with the said Sir Warham Saint Leger and Captain Heron, was appointed of special trust to be General over the rest. And with this also, by another letter of commission, the said Earl and all those noblemen, with also Sir. W. S. and Captain H., or any two of them, were authorized to every parcel of the said service in general, and (if further cause and occasion so required) with the advice and consent of the more part of your Majesty's Privy Council here left behind me your Deputy, to pursue, invade, and plague with hostilitye whatsoever rebels or enemyes to your Highness in those borders or elsewhere in this realm.

These things thus left in order, I, your Highness' Deputy, accompanied with the Earl of Kildare, Francis Agard, and other the captains and retynew of your Majesty's army here, toke our jorney into the rebel's country northwards. And in our absence, Cahir O'Reigly, Shane, and Owen, three brethren to O'Reigly that now is, came to Rathesker^d in Uryell, the last of September, in the night-tyme, and burned two villages, and retourning back in the break of the day, were so pursued by the Lord of Lowth with the horsemen of Uryell and Roger Fynrglas,^e Captain of the garrison of Ardee, as Shane O'Reigly was sore wounded, and two of their footmen slain, and 14 of their horses taken. The 5th day of October, for the better revenge of that former feat, the Earl of Desmond with the rest of the lords and gentlemen of Mounster attending upon him, and the Lord of Trymlettston, Captain of the garrison of Kells, with other of the gentlemen and force of the country attending on him, went into the said Cahir's country and made a prey of a thowsand kyne, and burned a great piece of his country, and camped there that night; and after returned every man to his charge. Synce which tyme there was no harme done by those rebels in those borders.

Afterwards, Shane O'Neill with his force came to Uryell the 13th of October in the night tyme, in as secret wise as he could; remayning himself in a privy place in the country, with the more part of his host; and sent a force of his horsemen and footmen to Terfeighan, beside Drogheda,—who at the

^b Afterwards created Lord Castleconnel.

^c Chief of Owney, in the counties Limerick and Tipperary.

^d Two miles and a half west of Dunleer, in the Co. Louth, then called Uriel.

^e One of an Anglo-Danish family, seated at Westphalston, in Fingal, near Dublin.

day-rising did prey and burne in the country, and in their retourne towards Shane O'Neill, (part of the prey being dryven afore them) the Lord of Lowth, Sir Warham Saint Leger and Captain Heron, perceiving the fire, marched towards the same, (the Earl of Desmond with his company following after them,) and lighted upon McMahowne^f and other of the rebels, and killyd of them the same time above 200 men, and took of their horses and hackneys above eleven score, and took of their gentlemen prisoners, without the loss of any man on our side. And so the rebels were chased out of the country; —Shane O'Neill himself with all his company flying to their fastness. After which conflict those of Uryell, finding divers of Shane's men scattered in woods and other places, slew them.

The whole rising-out of the English pale, within two days after, were assembled, (upon occasion of Shane O'Neill's said entries) for the defence of the borders, to the number of 3,000, besides the garrisons, and Shane O'Neill came with his host eftsoon to the borders of Uryell the Wednesday next following, being the 16th of October, and burned two villages. Whereupon he was pursued by the lords and gentlemen of your Majesty's said English pale and Munster, namely the Baron of Delvin, the Lord of Lowth, Sir Warham St. Leger, and Captain Heron, with their horsemen, the Lord of Trymleston, Sir Thomas Cusack, and divers other knights and gentlemen of the English Pale, having the leading of men. So as the rebel, perceiving the same, retyned towards his fastnes, and, being stowtly charged, was put to flight. In which conflict and onsett, O'Hanlan, captain of a country on the borders so called, with divers others of the traitor's men, were slayne, and two hondreth of their horses and hacneys taken, with the spoil of their weapon and apparel, and no hurt done to any of our syde, but only two horsemen hurt.

This done, understanding that those three brethren of O'Reigly's, Owen, Shane and Cahir, were the chieftest disturbers of the English pale, and to the intent to be revenged upon them, the Earl of Desmond, the Lord of Lowth, and Sir Thomas Cusack, being at Ardye with the rest of the Commissioners, required the Mayor of Dublin to meet in the borders within fower days after, with six score able men of the city's power, and did write to the Lord Chancellor, and the Justice Plunkett, and the gentlemen of Meath, appointed captains of baronies, to the number of 2,000 men, to meet the lords and gentlemen attending there, for the plaguing of those rebels. And they accordingly assembled, went with the said lords, the Bishop of Meath, Sir Thomas Cusack, and the captains, gentlemen, and forces aforesaid, with five days' victuals, into the countries of the said Owen, Shane and Cahir, and there burned much corn, and destroyed in effect the country, camping there three nights; and after, every man returned to his charge.

For the revenge thereof, the said Shane O'Neill with his main host, came sodeynely into Uriell, which is the eastest part of all that long border, and there did burn certain villages in the country, what time, none of the aforesaid lords, gentlemen, or forces, were then near hand in those parts. But the Lord of Lowth, Sir Warham St. Leger, Captain Heron, and Symon Barnewall, having with

^f Hugh M'Mahon, chieftain of Monaghan, inaugurated in the year 1560.

them not in all an hondreth horsemen, encountered with the rebels and kylled of their horses, and for lacke of more ayde, were fayne to retourne ; and so the enemyes departed. Thus, having advertized your Highness the full discoorse of as much as happened to be doune in the absence of me, your Majesty's Deputy, which was to the greate charge of the lords, gentlemen, and inhabitants of the English Pale, who, in our opinions, have, for their humble, willing, and dewtyfull behayvyor in those afayres, deserved your princely thanks to their encouragement in the lyke. We pray the Almighty Lorde to protect your Majesty, long and prosperously to reigne over us, and graunt you victorie over all youre enemyes. From Dublyn, the 22d of November, 1566.

Your Majesty's most humble and faithful subjects and servants,

A. DUBLIN, CANG :

II. SYDNEY,

H. MIDEN,

G. KILDARE,

R. DAREN,

JO. PLUNKET,

WARIAM SENTLEGER,

THOMAS CUSAKE.

JOHN CHALONER,